

(2.)

A

SECOND PART
OF THE
EXPERIENCE
OF

William Cudworth:

BEING

An Account of his Trials and Sufferings,
after he had received *Jesus Christ*.

Errare Possum Hereticus esse Nolo.



Printed in the Year MDCCCLIV.

A

SECOND EDITION

EXETER

WILLIAM B. ELLIS

Author of "The History of the County of Devon" and "The History of the County of Cornwall"

Printed by J. W. P. & Co. Exeter

1850

Price 10s. 6d.

Bound in cloth



T H E
A C C O U N T, &c.

I Thought to have passed this Part of my Experience over in Silence: but I find it is in vain for me to expect Peace in so doing, since (after a Space of nigh ten Years) upon any Success God is pleased to give to my Endeavours for the Good of Souls, Envy and Prejudice arise fresh in the Hearts of the old Adversaries; and the most groundless Calumnies are propagated, to render me uselefs if possible. To prevent this Evil, by manifesting what is the real Truth, is my sole Design; and not to give Offence to any one, nor to revive any Thing controversial; being determin'd now (as much as in me lies) to know nothing but JESUS CHRIST, and him crucified.

I have already took Notice in the former Part of my Experience, p. 7, 8, that after four or five Years spent in seeking the Salvation of God, I was perswaded and enabled by the Spirit of God to come to Christ, by a direct Act of Faith, as a lost Sinner; and that the God of Hope filled me with all Joy and Peace in believing, that the Effect was answerable to the Faith, and prov'd itself to be of God: that I found it correspond with the Scripture-Descriptions and Declarations concerning Faith: and that I found it gave the greatest Glory to God, as well as brought the

the most Comfort and Strength to my own Soul, of any Thing I had hitherto experienc'd.

Upon this, in the Fulness of my Heart, I frequently convers'd with my Minister, and besought him to point out Christ more to the People, as a free Saviour, to be believed in for all Salvation, in an immediate and direct Manner, finding that this precious Truth had been made of such particular Use to my own Soul. He used to assent to what I said as right: but finding my Conversation with some was bless'd, to the bringing them to the same happy Experience; and they beginning to speak to him, as I had done, he could not bear it, but made an Alarm in the Congregation against me. But wanting something particular to accuse me of, he paid me a Visit, in which he endeavoured to entangle me in my Talk, supposing a Case of one who had committed some of the most notorious Sins as could be named. The Answer I return'd was by Way of Query, What Remedy could he point out to such a One? Could he direct to any Thing more proper, against both the Guilt and Power of Sin, than the Blood of Christ? I answered him thus, because I had read of a Misrepresentation of a Gospel-Minister about a Century ago, something bordering upon this. But as this would not do, he sought another Accusation against me, and in a little Time I was desired to meet the Minister and Elders upon something that was to be laid to my Charge. I accordingly appeared, and found the Accusation was that I had said, *If I embrued my Hands in my Father and Mother's Blood, it would not startle my Assurance.* I told them, I should be far from vindicating such an Expression, if I had said it; but as I had not, it was my Duty to deny it. My Accusers were a Society of young Men, who (when they were examin'd for a Proof of it) referr'd to the Minister. The Elders then made Enquiry

Enquiry of him; and he referred to one Mrs. *Shan*, a Member of the Church, who was then not able to come Abroad, being so near her Time: whereupon it was appointed for me, an Elder or two, the Minister, and others, to meet with Mrs. *Shan*, that it might be decided Face to Face. When I came there, I found the Minister at the Place; who immediately said, Mr. *Cudworth*, I am sorry you should have so much Trouble, what Mrs. *Shan* heard you say is not at all amiss: and accordingly, when we assembled again at the Vestry, I desired and had my Ticket for the Communion, as a Testimony I was clear from the Charge; nevertheless I thought it not proper (for Peace Sake) to come to the Communion, unless I found their Spirits better. And some Time after I desir'd a Dismission, and had it granted me, sign'd by the Minister and three Elders, testifying that I had been a Member five Years, had behaved during the whole Term free from all Church-Censure, and might be admitted into any Christian Congregation where Providence should order my Lot. And as far as I know of my own Heart, if I had continued twenty Years a Member, I should have sought the Good of the Whole, and prevented all Division as much as possible; and the only Harm I would have endeavour'd to do to him, or any of his Congregation, would have been to have made them as happy in God's Salvation as I was myself: But his meddling with me, in that Way of Opposition he did, had a Tendency to bring much Trouble on his own Head. About this Time he preach'd and printed two Sermons, call'd, *Stedfastness in the Faith recommended*; and inserted, by Way of Note, what he judged a Confutation of Assurance to be had by a direct Act of Faith. I counted it my Duty to make a Reply, in a Pamphlet, intitled; *A Vindication of the Doctrine of Assurance of Faith*; in which I not only proved it to be the Sentiment of the succeeding

Presbyters of *Scotland*, but also of all the first Reformers, and their Successors, such as *Luther, Calvin, Melancton, Beza, Bullinger, Bucer, Knox, Craig, Melvil, Bruce, Davidson, Forbes, &c.* The most eminent Doctors and Professors of Theology that have been in the Protestant Churches, such as *Ursinus, Zanchius, Junius, Piscator, Rollock, Daneus, Wendelinus, Cbamiarius, Sharpius, Bodius, Pareus, Attingius, Triglandii, (Gisbertus, and Jacobus) Arnoldus, Marcius*: The four Professors of *Leyden*, viz. *Walleus, Rivetus, Polyander, Thyssus; Wollebius, Heidegerus, Essenius, Turrentinus, &c.* With many eminent *British* Divines, such as *Perkins, Pemble, Willet, Gouge, Roberts, Burgess, Owen, &c.* The Churches themselves of *Helvetia, the Palatinate, France, Holland, England, Ireland, Scotland*, in their Standards of Doctrine: All the *Lutheran Churches*: The renown'd *SYNOD of Dort*, made up of eminent Divines, call'd and commission'd from Seven reform'd States and Kingdoms: Besides those of the several Provinces of the *Netherlands*: These all of them stand for the special *Fiducia*, Confidence, or appropriating Perswasion of Faith, that was now disputed against by my Minister; and which I counted my Duty to defend, as well as I was enabled. I had got no peculiar *Nostrum* by the End, but was pleading for the *good old Way*, which was lost out of most of the Churches; and from whence is to be ascribed much of their Deadness and Barrenness, from which Estate may the Lord deliver them.

About this Time I was also called to speak to a little Company, which I did with some Blessing: Thereupon, and upon this, and my publishing my Book, I was desired by Mr. *W——d* to join him as a Labourer, having a little before been called to the Care of the School at the *T——le*. I gladly consented, and I believe should have gone on comfortably

fortably there, had it not been for a Woman who
 had the Ear of the Ministers, pretended to have ex-
 traordinary Visions and Revelations, and would in
 her own Spirit be frequently Brow-beating the young
 Preachers, I could not but look upon her as a de-
 ceiv'd Woman, and she upon me as an Adversary
 to her Way: She profess'd she never felt what I
 spoke, and how should she when it had always a
 Tendency to bring her to experience something
 which she was as yet ignorant of; and being above
 Instruction, but rather sitting as Judge upon it, she
 was much offended with the Opposition of her No-
 tions, I had took them hitherto to have been all
 of one Mind at the T——le, but now began to
 see it was otherwise; and was much concern'd, when
 I was inform'd by a Friend that Mr. C-*nm-k*, some
 Time before I came, had been severely check'd by
 Mr. H. H, for speaking of Spiritual Things in much
 the same Way as I did, But however, the Lord
 was my Witness, I desir'd nothing more than Peace
 and Unity. I endeavour'd to be content with my
 Lot: and as the Lord's Providence, and not my own
 Seeking, had brought me there, I thought it my
 Duty to attend the same Providence in bringing
 me through, being as willing to abide in Peace
 and Unity as I possibly could. Another Thing that
 threatned me with a Storm was the Minister I had
 belonged to, though he had given me an honourable
 Dismission; yet he failed not to prejudice the Dis-
 senting Ministry against me, and that by a Means as
 shall be related in its proper Place: I found the Ef-
 fect of this among several Dissenters, who though
 they had never conversed with me, yet beheld me
 with a very evil Eye. And the Woman, the pre-
 tended Prophetess above-mention'd, contented not
 herself with prejudicing as many of the T——le
 Ministers as she had any Influence over, but also as
 many of the People as she could; and she had at
 that

that Time the Ear of many Hundreds, being the Chief of all the Women Labourers, and the next Person to the Ministers. The first remarkable Effect I found of these Things was in a Conference of Ministers, wherein I was challenged by Mr. H. H. for not insisting upon the Precepts and Threatnings of the Gospel. I signify'd to him, that I had nothing against insisting upon Obedience upon Gospel Principles; but desired always to do so, according to the Measure of my Gift: But as to the Precepts of the Gospel, I did not look upon the Gospel as a Bundle of Precepts, or as a new Law; but when I spake of the Gospel in Contradistinction from the Law, I understood purely the glad Tidings of Salvation by Jesus Christ to be believed in, and that (as our first Reformers had observ'd) the Gospel was not to be distinguish'd from the Law by Books and Leaves. But

“ Where e'er in Sacred Writ we see

“ A Word of Grace or Promise free,

“ With Blessings dropt for JESUS Sake,

“ We these for Gospel News may take.

“ But where a Precept strict we find,

“ With Promise to our doing join'd;

“ Or, Threatnings with a wrathful Frown:

“ This as the Law, we justly own.”

ERSKINE'S *Gospel Sonnets*, P. 226.

When Mr. A. and Mr. I. came to Town, they were also prejudiced against me, I found the Consequence, such as griev'd me exceedingly, that was Preaching in such a Strain, as must distress the Hearers in a very unprofitable Manner. I was not for crying Peace, Peace, where there is no Peace. I was less inclin'd, to preach Peace to Sinners, while determin'd to continue in their natural State; only I was for encouraging them to come to Christ, confidently for a good State, not doubting of his Faithfulness,

fulness, who had promised that, *whoever came unto him, he would in no wise cast him out*; well knowing, that they who were made willing so to come, were so far wrought upon by the Spirit of God, and made willing in a Day of his Power.

Instead of this Kind of Preaching, which had been hitherto blest amongst the *Methodists*, in bringing many Souls home to God. Mr. *A.* being misinform'd and prejudiced, he only laid down Marks and Evidences of those that were come, without taking any notice of the free Given Saviour, and Salvation in him, or of that direct Act of Faith, whereby a Sinner does come and finds welcome, and every Mark and Evidence is produced with Ease. One Evening in Particular, Mr. *A.* having laid down Eight of these Marks, and bid the People read Mr. *Allens* Book to find more. I went home, and thought to write him some Reasons against that Manner of Preaching, and then wrote those, which I have since printed. The design of that Book, has been much misunderstood, and misrepresented, as those who peruse it candidly will find. It was not design'd to exclude Marks being laid down; there are Numbers laid down in the Scripture, but it was to prevent their being substituted in the Place of the direct Act of Faith on Christ, for all Salvation. *Assurance of Faith*, is by a *direct* Act on Christ. *Assurance of Sense*, is by Reflection on Marks and Evidences in ourselves. If a Man says, I am a believer, he is to be examined by Marks; but if a Man is saying, what shall I do to be saved, he is not to be directed to wait for Marks and Evidences, (for he can never be better till he comes to Christ,) but he is to be directed to go to Christ, in a direct Act of Faith. *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shall be saved*, without waiting to be certain of his Conversion first, by Marks and Evidences, and the Reason of it
is

is plain: No Man is thoroughly Converted or effectually Call'd, till he is persuaded, and enabled to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offer'd to him in the Gospel, and therefore if he waits to be Converted first, he may wait for ever; because true Conversion terminates in Believing, and is not to be Evidenced without it. The Ground of our coming to Christ, is this, "That he is the Saviour of *Sinners*, of the *lost*, and not that he is the Saviour of the Converted, or the Elect, &c. Mere Nature without any Operation of the Spirit of God, can come to Christ upon a supposed Conversion, with a God I thank thee, I am not as other Men; but the Faith of God's Operation, is to come as Sinners to Christ, as we are, and venture to believe under a Sense of our Sins, Weakness and Wants, and cry out with Appropriation, my Lord, and my God: And if this Confidence doth not produce the best and most salutary Effects in the Soul, let it be discarded; but it always has in mine, and every ones Experience that I have known exercised therein, and we must Confess that our Defects arise from our having too little, and not too much of this Life.

Since I wrote this Account I have had the Concurrence of Mr. A. (who was then my Antagonist) on this very Point; but such is the force of Prejudice and Party, to cast a Mist before the Eyes, and prevent a right Understanding, and such was the Vigilance of the Woman, or pretended Prophetess, to keep up such a Spirit of Prejudice, that she might gain her Point, that I cannot but Impute all the Divisions that followed to this Woman's wicked Industry.

It was in this Spirit of Prejudice, I and others I believe were misunderstood, about Sanctification, as appears by the Original Writings on both Sides, in the beginning of the Debate: When Mr. W----d
being

being at *Plymouth*, waiting to set Sail for *Georgia*, receiv'd two Letters against me and Mr. *S---s*, which Letters Mr. *W---d* sent us to consider, and to which I made Remarks, and Mr. *S --* return'd Answer, as follows.

Mr. *I---*s LETTER, to Mr. *W---*d,
at *Plymouth*.

' There is some Difference here between some of the Brethren, with Respect to the Manner of God's Working upon the Hearts of his Children ; some will have it that there is no Grace infused into the Heart of a Believer'.

Remark, It must be a Mistake to say we have deny'd Infusion, for if by the Word infused is meant Imparted, or Communicated to our Souls, we allow Grace, (understood for the free Favour of God and Power, and Propensity to do his Will,) is imparted, communicated and possess'd by every true Believer.

Letter, ' And that there is no Change wrought upon the Faculties of the Soul.'

Remark, This must be another Mistake, for we have not asserted any such Thing ; we believe, that by Virtue of Union with Christ, as we are made Righteous in Christ's Righteousness, so are we made Spiritual in his Spirit ; Strong in his Strength, Alive in his Life, Light in his Light, &c. This Change upon the Faculties of our Soul, we allow and take to be according to Scripture.

Letter, ' But that it is the Person of Christ dwells in us.'

Remark,

Remark, Not the Corporeal Part, but his Spirit, and this is so plainly Scriptural, that it speaks for itself, *Eph. 3, 17. John 17, 23, Gal. 2, 20.*

Letter, ' So that whenever he is withdrawn from us, there is no difference between the Christian and the Natural Man.'

Remark, The Lord is our Righteousness and Strength, and if he should *totally* be withdrawn, we should lose our Righteousness and Strength, and what have we more? we don't suppose ourselves like Natural Men in any other Sense.

Letter, ' Indeed I think this is wrong, it is evident to me from Scripture, that the Lord by his Grace and Spirit, works a Change in the Heart and Affections of every True Believer.'

Remark, This is the very Thing we plead for, as what we have experienced thro' direct believing in, and appropriating of Jesus Christ, and we would therefore recommend this same Faith to others.

Mr. *A*——s LETTER, to Mr. *W*——d,
at *Plymouth*.

Letter, ' Dear Brother *S*—— seldom comes to hear, I have talked to him, or rather he to me, several Times of late; he Charges us with being too legal in our Preaching, tho' I think, I was never more assisted than of late, to preach Christ as our whole Righteousness, whole Sanctification and Redemption.'

Remark, If Christ is our whole Sanctification, then we have none but as United to him.

Letter,

Letter, ' But Br. S—— and I differ vastly in our
 • Opinion of Sanctification ; He says all our Sancti-
 • fication is in Jesus.'

Remark, It must be all in Jesus, if he is our
 whole Sanctification,

Letter, ' And that the Spirit shines in us, but that
 • none of the Faculties of the Soul are renew'd, and
 • if the Spirit of God withdraws : That the Belie-
 • ver is the very same with an Unbeliever, and that
 • there is no Difference.'

Remark, This must be a Mistake, for if we by
 the Spirit of God are persuaded and enabled to re-
 ceive Jesus Christ, we must certainly be renew'd and
 made faithful thereby. As the Sun enlightens and
 enlivens the Face of the Earth by its Presence, not
 changing the real Nature of Earth, Air or Water,
 but making them both Light and Fruitful thereby.
 So the Sun of Righteousness arising with healing in
 his Wings, enlightens and enlivens the Soul by his
 Gracious Presence, and we that were sometimes
 Darkness, are now made Light, (not in ourselves)
 but in the Lord. In his Light shall we see Light,
 who is given for a Light to the Gentiles, &c. Was
 the Earth, Air, or Water to be Light and Fruitful
 in themselves, they would have no more Occasion
 for the Sun. So was we to be made Righteous and
 Fruitful in ourselves, we should have no further Oc-
 casion for Jesus Christ.

Letter, ' And that we shall carry none of the
 • Sanctifying Work of the Spirit to Heaven with us.'

Remark, We don't know what Mr. A. means by
 the Sanctifying Work of the Spirit, we shall carry
 Christ with us, who is our Sanctification fundamen-
 tally,

tally, and we shall possess him in a far more pure and unmix'd Way : Than we can, during our Continuance in this corrupt Estate, and therefore we groan and wait for the Redemption of the Body.

Letter, ' He says, we are as much Sanctified the Moment we believe, as we are at all.'

Remark, Where we speak of Christ as our Sanctification, we are already compleat in him, who is made of God unto us Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption. If we call our Knowledge, our Love of Christ, and the Change upon the Faculties of our Soul by possessing him, our Sanctification. We shall, we trust thro' Grace, grow more and more in that, and possess him in a more full and extensive Degree.

Besides these Remarks we made privately, Mr. S----- wrote Mr. A---- a Letter in the following Words.

LONDON, *August 11th, 1744.*

My very Dear Brother,

I have had your Letter from Mr. W--d, by which I find you have not understood and Brother C----b, and which I hope you will not to any more represent to be our Principles, as you have done there, because you will greatly wrong us if you do: I will in a few Words, tell my dear Brother what I believe and Experience, viz, That Jesus Christ is my Compleat and only Saviour, that he is given of God to me, for Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption, and that there is none else; and that the Moment my Soul receiv'd Christ by Faith I receiv'd a Compleat Salvation in him, which being so of itself, admits of no Addition or Denomination

nation from me, and this I continually look to as my own, my only and my compleat Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption, and in this only I seek to be found, not having on my own Righteousness, viz. That which I am enabled to perform by the Assistance of God's Spirit, but put it from me, (i. e. in Point of Dependance) and count it as Dung and Dross for Christ, and look to the Lord Jesus for him to communicate to my Soul *more and more daily of the compleat Salvation I have in him*, and pray him to reveal himself more and more in my Heart, till he is fully formed there. By Virtue of which, I strive to put off the Old Man and his Deeds Day by Day, and to live upon his Fulness only, and abide in him continually as my new and Divine Life, and thus I desire that I may glorify him, be to the praise of his Gospel, and be beneficial to others; and because he has saved me with an everlasting and compleat Salvation, (and that while I was a Sinner and void of all Good :) I would not do the least Thing that offend him, or grieves his most Holy Spirit; but desire to be continually crying out, Lord, what shall I do for thee, what wilt thou have me to do. Live thou in me, thy Will and Thine only be done in me, by me, and upon me in Time of Eternity. But nothing of this to make my Salvation more compleat, or add the least to it; for that is Christ, Christ in me, Christ on me. O glorious Covering! Glorious Inherent Righteousness, the very Righteousness, the very Holiness of God. I freely confess, I know of no Inherent Grace or Holiness besides Christ living in me by his Spirit; but the Holy Spirit does now in Measure, and shall when I am out of the Body fill all the Faculties of my Soul with his Divine Life and Nature, and so he will be in me, and I in him, making with his other Members one compleat Body. This my dear Brother according to the best of my Understanding is

what I believe and Experience: You have it in Freedom and Simplicity, and by no means in a Way of Dispute. If my dear Man that I am in any Thing wrong, I should be glad for you to point it out to me, I would not have you shew this or make it Publick, neither will I any Thing you write. My kind Love to all, please to send the Inclos'd to Mr. H. H. with Tenderneſs and Love, I remain your affectionate Brother in Chriſt.

J. S.

By theſe Original Papers in the Commencement of the Diſpute, may be diſcovered what was the real Mind of each, and ſurely they might have gone on in Love without renting each other; had it not been for the wicked Zeal and Agency of that Woman, who having great Influence and an Implacable Spirit, always took Care by ſome underhand Means or other, to prevent a good Underſtanding. And I would again obſerve, that I do not publiſh theſe Papers to revive the Old Debate, I have had enough of it already. But that now every one may ſee how we have been miſrepreſented, what the dreadful Errors we held were. And would it not amaze any one to find that there was no Irregularity charged upon our Morals, but that this was the real State of the Caſe, after they have been terrified with the dreadful Names of Antinomian, Ahab, Bad Man, Enemy to the Croſs of Chriſt, Promoter of Speculative Faith, Locuſts, a Diſhonour to the Lord, &c. ſuch as was ſent in a Letter not long ſince. Let any impartial Perſon compare the abovementioned Sentiments with any of theſe dreadful Appellations, and ſee if there is the leaſt Foundation for them. As to the Expreſſions that might drop, from any of us in the warmth of Diſpute and heat of Oppoſition, we are not to *make a Man an Offender for a Word, nor turn aſide the Juſt for a Thing of nought*. It ſhews a bad Spirit

Spirit in those that attempt it. As to my own Part, I have said, I would trample what I felt under my Feet as well as what I did, in Point of Dependance : But otherwise I desire to feel more and more of the Love of God shed Abroad in my Heart by the Holy Ghost. But I never said the New Birth was the Devil's Brat, that is all Calumny. Every one that hears me know that I press the Necessity of being born again by the Spirit of God. That Christ is made of God unto us Sanctification or Holiness, I have frequently asserted ; and it is Scripture, Language, and Doctrine ; but I always maintained the Necessity of receiving and possessing Christ, that we might be partakers of the Divine Nature that is fundamentally in him, and by Union with him in us. As the Apostle says writing to *Philemon* vers. 6. Acknowledging of every good Thing which is in you in Christ Jesus. That Evangelical Repentance must flow from this Union with Christ, and from a sense of Pardon ; tho' a legal one is often where Christ is not known ; this I have often asserted, and have the Concurrence of all sound Protestants with me in it. We are not to indulge a Carelessness about the Sinfulness of our Nature or Practice, but be humbled and griev'd we should offend so Gracious a Lord, and I know by Experience that a Sense of Pardon will work an Abhorrence of every Evil Way. As to Faith, I have frequently defin'd the general Nature of it to be a Perswasion, a real Perswasion in the general Nature of it, as it is when a Man hears there is such a Place as France and believes it ; but to say, I hold Faith to be no more than this, is evidently a base and slanderous Calumny for I always maintain'd, that this Perswasion was not a Human, but a Divine Perswasion both with respect to Object and Subject, and that the special Nature of it, was a receiving and resting upon Jesus Christ alone for all Salvation, and that the Language of it in the Soul is my Lord

and my God; that I explain Faith thus, I appeal to all that hear me, or have read my Writings, and moreover that appropriating Persuasion, which I esteem Faith overcomes the World, and bears forth the Fruit of Righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ to the Glory and Praise of God.

x When a Man is thus persuaded and enabled to believe in Jesus Christ, love him, &c. he is not to be reckoned an Unbeliever every Time the Act or Acts are intermitted, as when he sleeps or has his whole Mind occupied another Way; because when he awakes again, or a fresh Occasion calls forth the Act, he then demonstrates that he had the Power and Propensity abiding in him during the Time the Act was intermitted, even as an Art or Science abides in the Artift or Student when unexercised.* Hence arises the Distinction betwixt Habit and Act: Habit signifying that Power and Propensity consider'd, as it lies hidden in the Soul when no Act is discern'd, as something which though necessarily there, antecedent to the Act, yet no otherwise to be known or supposed but by the Act. "Habitual Grace is Faith, Love, Joy, Hope, and the rest of the Graces of the Gospel in their Root or common Principle:— But it is not to be discern'd but by its becoming actual." *Dr. OWEN, on Communion with Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.*

" 'Tis difficult to describe exactly the Nature of Regeneration. 1. Because of the Disputes about the Nature of it: Whether it be a Quality, or a Spiritual Substance? Whether, if a Quality, it be a

* "It may Indeed be question'd whether the Soul doth Act Faith and not know it: But I think it cannot be denied, but that the Soul may have Faith and not Act it." *DURANT'S Comfort and Counsel for dejected Souls.* page 82. Habit

Habit or a Power? Or, whether it be the Holy Ghost personally?

2. 'Tis difficult, because *it is visible; not in itself, but in its Effects.*

3. 'Tis difficult, because *of the natural Ignorance which is still in the Minds of the Best.* Even what we know of the Truths of God, suffers an Eclipse by our carnal Conceptions of them; for all Notions we frame of them, have a Tincture of Sense and Fancy."

CHARNOCK'S *Sermon on Regeneration.*

If I was under any Mistake at this Time it was in Judging that this Root or Common Principle of Spiritual Acts was the Holy Ghost personally dwelling and abiding in us, and I was led to think thus :

1. Because I could find no Habit distinct from the Spirit mentioned in Scripture, the Scripture always speaking either of the Spirit, our living, walking, or being led thereby, or else of the actings of the Soul in Faith, Love, &c.

2. Some had grossly described this Habit as a distinct Spirit in the Soul, or Spirit of the Man regenerated, and sometimes as a Creature having Eyes, Nose, Mouth, and Limbs, and a Power of Feeling spread throughout its Limbs, &c.

3. Others were led to a neglect of attempting or exercising Faith, Love, &c. waiting in the Expectation of first finding this Habit, whereas that Habit or whatever it may be supposed or called, is never to be discern'd at all in itself, and therefore the Acts of Faith or Love, &c. are not to be suspended on that Account, but rather to be Vigorously attempted that this Power and Propensity may be discovered.

If we agree that there is the Power and Propensity of a gracious Act abiding when the Act is intermitted we are agreed in the Thing, tho' we are not agreed

agreed what Name to give it, and all the Practical Ends may thereby be answered without any further Contentions, and having said thus much on the Subject, I must adjudge them either Ignorant or Evil-minded that pretend to Charge me any more with Heterodoxy on this Head:

But to return, Mr. *W*——*l*d being gone to *Georgia*, the Storm that was gathering broke out upon me. I was inform'd, one *Monday* Afternoon, that I was that Night to be turn'd out of the Conference for an *Antinomian* in Doctrine: and this was brought about so expeditiously, by the Agency of the Woman above-mention'd, those Words in *Jer.* xv. 10, 11, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, were very useful to me at this Time; and I came to the Conference, resign'd to the Will of God. Mr. *C*——*k* had not been in Town for a considerable Time, nor had any Letters or Correspondence been betwixt him and me. When all the Conference were assembled, I was accused by One or Two: But as they were puzzled how to lay a Charge against me, I proposed to make a frank Confession of all my particular Sentiments; and if they adjudged any of them to be *Antinomianism*, they should write it down in a Paper, pin it on my Back, and I would go forth from them all, thankful, that I was counted worthy to suffer for the Truth's Sake. I accordingly made my Confession, and as particular as possible, for my Heart was then filled with Zeal for God and his Truth. As soon as I had done, Mr. *C*——*k* with uncommon Energy declared that what I had said was the Truth, and he would seal it with his Blood; and as he was of the same Mind, he looked upon the Proceedings to be as much levelled against himself as me. This sudden Turn put all the Conference in a Consternation! He then asked the Members of the Conference if they had ever heard me? Most of them said they had not. He
desired

desired then that I might preach next Morning at the T——le, and that they would be present to hear. I took those Words, *Col. ii. 10, Ye are compleat in him*; and as they gave me full Scope to declare my whole Mind, I scrupled not to do it: Gave full Satisfaction, we were all Friends, and the above-mention'd Woman was turn'd out of the Conference for her wicked Contrivances. But Mr. C——k conceiving that these Proceedings were more levelled at him than me, began a Course of Lectures on the Epistle to the *Galatians*; and treating those who were contrary minded with much Warmth in his Discourses, rais'd great Attention. Mr. H. H. came to Town to oppose him, and great Contention ensued. An Association of Ministers was appointed, but Mr. H. H. objected me being admitted as One; unless by hearing me he could be satisfy'd of my Gifts, or Call to the Work; which he accordingly did, and declared himself satisfied. And now the Woman above mention'd profess'd to be convinc'd of her Evil in opposing me as she had done, and on that Account was admitted into the Conference again; and having by this Artifice gain'd her Point, she prov'd a more bitter Adversary than ever. At the Association nothing was fix'd, but all was left for three Months longer. Mr. C——k went into the Country; and when he came back, his Preaching and Conduct manifested that he was won over to the Interest of the *Moravians*: This gave me much Concern, for I conceiv'd their Episcopal *Hierarchy* (which was design'd to be universal, and not confin'd to one Nation or Kingdom, as is the Episcopacy of *England* and *Ireland*) was a dangerous Constitution, putting it in the Power of a few Men at the Helm of Affairs to destroy that Gospel they now got Ground by. And as this had been the Case with *Rome* heretofore, whose Faith was once spoken of throughout the whole World, I did not see why it might not be the Consequence
again

again with Regard to these People should they prevail. On this Account, for my own Part, I could not in Conscience join them; for I conceiv'd that any private Ease, Satisfaction, or Advantage that might accrue to me thereby, would not be a Warrant for me to join my Hand in what would at length prove so publick an Evil.

My Adversaries now being at a Loss for something to lay to my Charge, brought up the old Story about my having once said, *That if I embued my Hands in my Father and Mother's Blood, it would not startle my Assurance.* I inform'd them, I had been clear'd of that Expression two Years before. But being desir'd to go Mr. G—d's about it, I went; and Mr. G—d inform'd us that Mr. Cr——ks, my old Minister, had been there that Morning, and that he said he heard me himself; And for further Proof Mr. G produced the Church-Book, belonging to his Meeting, wherein was recorded an Agreement between Mr. Cr——sk and his Society of young Men and Elders; a considerable Time after I had left the Church with an honourable Dismission, and Clearance from all Church-Censure. This Agreement was made by the Mediation of six Ministers, and the Terms of it ran as tho' I had been prov'd guilty; when on the contrary it was notorious, that I had been honourably cleared from the Charge. I observ'd to them, that if Mr. Cr——ks had heard me himself, he need not referred to Mrs. Shan, as has been before related; and besides, I had an honourable Dismission under his own Hand, and his Elders. However, I thought it well to visit the Elders, and get fresh Testimonials of them, which I did, under their own Hands, and before Witness, of my being accused, and honourably cleared, a considerable Time before I left the Church.

And

And now being tir'd with the indefatigable Zeal of my Opposers to find something against me, if it was but an Expression; and it being reported that Mr. H. H. and Mr. C——k would agree, if it was not for me; I was willing that should be put to the Trial, by my leaving them in Peace; which I did on the 12th of June, 1745, and was receiv'd by the little Society that I had began before I join'd with Mr. W——d. And that this might be done without making any Rent at the T——le, I accepted of an Offer that Mr. H. H. made for the Ministers to preach for me; and accordingly chose Mr. C——k for the next Lord's Day, that all might appear to be done in Peace and Love: and Mr. C——k chose those remarkable Words, *Revel. iii. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.*

And here it becomes me to set up my *Ebenezer*, and thank the Lord for keeping me so in the Midst of all these Trials and Enemies, that they were at so great a Loss to lay any Thing to my Charge, to vindicate their Proceedings against me.

The little Society I had gave me a Call to be set apart to administer the Ordinances to them, and we waited about six Months, and then join'd in Church Order. There were Numbers of People at first came to hear, and approv'd: But this the old Adversaries could not bear, and great Opposition arose from every Quarter; and by open and secret Insinuations, awaken'd Souls (that were not willing to judge for themselves) were often made afraid to hear or come nigh us. Mr. J——n W——y put out two Dialogues, and receiv'd two Answers, the last of which silenc'd him. Mrs. A. D. laid many Things to our Charge in Doctrine, by Hear-say, which we never thought nor intended; and this occasioning a Reply, she wrote and printed a long Epistle to me, full of Uncharitableness

bleness and Rancour, and the most invidious Charges in Doctrine of Things never intended, wresting my Preface to Mr. *Richardson's* Piece to serve her Purpose: This will appear to any one who reads the short Letter I wrote to her, by Way of Answer, in 1748. Since this Time I have gone on, desiring Peace with all Men: And though we have suffered many Things from false Brethren within, and from open Enemies without, yet we are still a People before the Lord, through his good Hand upon us.

In December, 1751, I was called to visit the dear People at *Norwich*, in the Midst of their Persecution; and in September, 1753, the Lord in his Providence gave me another Call: I abode with them several Weeks, and this gave them an Opportunity to be better Witnesses than those who go by Hearsay. Since this I have had several Calls to *Norwich*, and have abode with them for long Seasons; and under some Trials, by which they have had still farther Proof of me in Regard to the Soundness of Doctrine, the Blessing which has attended my Word, and my Integrity of Heart for their Unity and Spiritual Welfare: To them then I appeal in these Respects, together with the Flock at *London*, as the most proper Witnesses of these Things, against all Gainfayers.

F I N I S.

